MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN WASHINGTON, D. C., JANUARY 31, 1936

The ninth meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1936, was held in its office in the Navy Department Building on Friday, January 31, 1936. The following members were present:

Mr. Moore, Chairman,
Mr. Swartwout,
Mr. Clarke,
Mr. Lawrie,
Mr. Howells,
also H. P. Caemmerer,

Executive Secretary and Administrative Officer.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS: The Minutes of the meetings held December 20 and 29, 1935, were approved.

2. GENERAL ARTEMAS WARD STATUE: Mr. Leonard Crunelle, sculptor, of Chicago, submitted a photograph of his full sized model of the General Artemas Ward Statue with letter, as follows:

January 30, 1936.

Dear Mr. Moore;

A photograph of the full size clay model of the General Artemas Ward statue was sent to Mr. Caemmerer yesterday. Although the figure is not yet finished I thought it best to send a photograph at this time.

When the figure was enlarged to full size, the hat held in the right hand seemed very heavy and I finally went back to the first model and placed it on the left arm as shown in the photograph. The mass of the hat helped to balance the lower part of the figure.

I am going on now with the finishing and will bring the work to a close at the earliest possible date. Photographs of the different views will be sent next time.

Very sincerely yours,
(Signed) Leonard Crunelle

Also he sent a telegram stating that the statue is to be 10' 9" high, including the base, and the pedestal, which is 9 feet high, not including steps.

Mr. Lawrie inspected the photograph and in general regarded the model satisfactory but made the following criticisms:

Is the head a bit large and is the head as fine as Mr. Crunelle wishes it to be?

Mr. Howells has made a sketch of an early American cannon that I think would be much handsomer than the round-butted one on the statue.

The buttons on the coat should be placed so as to be in line horizontally.

Mr. Moore felt that Mr. Crunelle should be asked to expedite the completion of the model so that the statue can be erected this year, the 300th anniversary of the founding of Harvard College. A letter embodying the criticisms made by Mr. Lawrie and the sketch made by Mr. Howells of a Revolutionary War cannon were sent to Mr. Crunelle. (Exhibit A)

3. FIFTEENTH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF ARCHITECTS: Mr. Moore read the following letter received from the State Department:

December 26, 1935.

My dear Dr. Moore:

With reference to previous correspondence, I enclose a copy of a letter dated December 2, 1935, from Mr. Stephen F. Voorhees, President of the American Institute of Architects, together with a copy of the report on the Thirteenth International Congress of Architects, held in Rome, Italy, from September 22 to 28, 1935, which is jointly signed by Mr. Voorhees and Mr. C. C. Zantzinger, Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively, of the American delegation to the Congress.

You will note that in the last paragraph of the report the hope is expressed that the Government will cooperate with the American Institute of Architects and other architectural societies in this country and officially issue an invitation to hold the Congress of 1939 in Washington, assuming the financial responsibility for its success.

Any suggestions you may care to make regarding these recommendations will be appreciated. If in your opinion it is advisable

to request the Congress to take action on this meeting, please set forth your reasons in order that they may be available for possible presentation to the Congress.

Very sincerely yours,
(Signed) Wilbur J. Carr,
Acting Secretary.

It was noted in the report of the Thirteenth International Convention held in Rome in 1935, made by C. C. Zantzinger, that the Fourteenth International Convention of Architects is to be held in Paris in 1937, during an international exposition and in 1939 the convention is to be held in the United States in the year of the New York Exposition.

The members of the Commission felt it would be well to support the American Institute of Architects in this matter and a letter was sent to Assistant Secretary of State R. Walton Moore accordingly. (Exhibit B)

4. OREGON MEMORIAL BUILDING: Mr. Moore brought to the attention of the Commission a copy of a bill introduced in Congress, H. J. Res. 450, to provide for the erection of a building to commemorate the winning of the Oregon country for the United States. The bill was referred to the Commission of Fine Arts by Hon. Fritz G. Lanham, Chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds of the House of Representatives, for comment and advice. The bill proposes an expenditure of $250,000 ($125,000 from the State of Oregon and $125,000 from the Government) for the building, which is to be erected at Champoeg, Oregon.

The Commission concurred in the passage of the bill and a letter was sent to Congressman Lanham accordingly, with the statement that the Commission would, if requested, advise as to the selection of an architect. (Exhibit C)

Mr. Swartwout said he had been informed that there is going to be a competition for a new Oregon State Capitol Building. The question was raised whether or not the Commission of Fine Arts would advise them as to an architect if called upon to do so. Mr. Moore said that the Commission of Fine Arts gives

advice on such a question when asked for it; it comes within the organic act creating the Commission of Fine Arts. Mr. Swartwout said it has been suggested that there be a "wide open" competition but as this is so very costly he suggested that in order to satisfy the architects in Oregon a competition be held among Oregon architects, from whom five or six could be selected to compete with a similar group of architects of prominence of the whole country. The members of the Commission believed that by such an arrangement a good design would be secured but that in the ultimate there would be no objection on the part of the Commission of Fine Arts to any scheme that the State of Oregon officials might adopt. Mr. Swartwout brought out the point that there is a strong spirit of state loyalty in the West and that it would be likely the State of Oregon would prefer an architect of that state.

5. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BUILDINGS: Mr. Nathan C. Wyeth, Municipal Architect, submitted designs for the following buildings:

a. Extension to the Anacostia Junior High School.

b. Fire Department building at Rhode Island Avenue and 14th Street, N. E., for which he has an appropriation of $7,500.

c. Mess Hall at the District of Columbia Reformatory at Occoquan, Virginia, for which he has an appropriation of $35,000.

The buildings were designed in the Colonial type of architecture in a manner satisfactory to the Commission and were therefore approved. (Exhibit D)

6. MURAL PAINTINGS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUILDING: Mr. Ed B. Rowan, Superintendent of the Section of Painting and Sculpture, Treasury Department, submitted revised sketches by Varnum Poor for mural paintings in the Department of Justice Building. These sketches represented the Bureau of Prisons and the Bureau of Pardons. Also he submitted a sketch of a mural to go in the Attorney General's reception room, the mural to be entitled "Victory

of Justice". The Commission requested that these be sent to Mr. Savage for criticisms and report. (Exhibit E)

7. JUSSERAND MEMORIAL: Mr. Moore presented a sketch designed by Mr. Kendall for the Jusserand Memorial, showing an exedra with a medallion of the late Ambassador Jusserand. This design was approved with the suggestion that the back of the exedra be scaled up and made higher and that the hedge be left flat. The treatment for a sunken garden is to be taken up when the memorial is erected. (Exhibit F)

8. LANDSCAPE PLAN FOR THE WHITE HOUSE GROUNDS: Mr. Hubbard of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission showed the Commission the report in regard to the White House grounds. The report includes a set of photostats of researches made by Mr. Morley Williams of the changes in the design since the original. Mr. Moore said he has the utmost respect for Mr. Williams's work as he is very careful. Mr. Moore asked if any of the trees had been planted by John Quincy Adams and Mr. Hubbard said researches indicated there is one such tree.

More important than these is the set of blue prints showing conditions that exist and of proposed changes. Mr. Hubbard showed a drive and rearrangement of the east entrance by providing a double entrance, one on a lower level. Mr. Moore said that in this it seemed they were overburdening a small house but Prof. Hubbard replied that this arrangement would not be made unless it is absolutely necessary. If this scheme were carried out the east fountain would be removed. According to the revised scheme the south fountain is moved nearer to the fence and is to be replaced by a well built fountain. There was some question about the flowers in connection with this fountain; Mr. Hubbard said the report contains some statement about cannas and like flowers. Mr. Hubbard said he would not be sorry if the pool in back of the White House were removed. Mr. Clarke

agreed, saying its omission would make the whole very much more dignified as the fountain has no particular significance in the grounds and seems to be more or less "floating around". Mr. Howells noted that there are two points about the fountain: one that it is physically going to pieces and that it might be moved to a somewhat different location.

In regard to the garden about the White House offices, Mr. Hubbard said this suggested straight lines and right angles. Mr. Moore asked about the treatment for the front of the White House and Professor Hubbard said it will be trees and turf and a few evergreens. Mr. Clarke thought this part of the design good.

Mr. Moore said that the last time he had seen the President he had told him that he would have a glimpse of the river and the President apparently had not thought of this. Mr. Hubbard believed that this vista toward the river with the Monument a little off axis would be very good.

Mr. Moore said that back in the days of Colonel Grant Mr. Olmsted had made a confidential report on the White House grounds, in which he stated that there is no estate of any consequence in this country with the grounds in such bad condition as those of the White House. He had shown this to Mrs. Coolidge with no results; with Mrs. Hoover he got a little farther but with Mrs. Roosevelt an order had come from the White House for a report on the grounds. Last summer he and Mr. Olmsted went over the grounds with the President and Mr. Olmsted expressed himself very freely about what ought to be done.

A rather large parking space shown in the proposed plan was objected to by the Commission. Mr. Clarke rather thought that for official occasions the streets were quite adequate as it would be too bad to have this large parking space for use during but a comparatively few days of the year.

As to the design for the rear Mr. Clarke thought the great lawn was a little out of scale--a little too bland and that there should be more development--something of a little more interest. The Commission did not like the straight line treatment of the hedge. Mr. Clarke said every home of that character had a formal garden and that they could never get away from the fact that the ladies of the White House would have to have a flower garden somewhere, as Mrs. Coolidge; further the only way to go from the formal lines of the house to the informal lines of the main part of the grounds is by means of a formal garden.

The Commission referred the report to Major Clarke for study and recommendations.

9. PAN AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION BUILDING: Mr. Clarke reported that during the past month he had been considering with Professor Hubbard a plan made by the National Capital Park and Planning Commission for the location of the Pan American Administration Building and that they had decided on Plan C, a print of which he submitted. This plan showed the new building in the triangle at 19th and Constitution Avenue on the site authorized by Congress. The letter which Mr. Clarke wrote to Mr. Nolen on the subject is as follows:

January 11, 1936.

Dear Mr. Nolen:

Since this is the first day I have been in the White Plains office this week, it is the first opportunity I have had to review the studies for the area between the proposed Pan American Annex Building and the new Department of Interior Building which you sent me with your letter of January 2nd.

I have gone over these plans and agree with you and with the members of the Coordinating Committee that Study C is the most satisfactory one

considering the three studies that were submitted. I think that this scheme will accommodate the best traffic arrangements and create a satisfactory relation between the two buildings.

It seems to me that further study should be given to the arrangement of the trees, but this is a matter which may be studied more in detail later on. I return the blue print herewith, upon which I have indicated a slight adjustment which may help to give a better balance between the tree masses on two sides of the Pan American Annex Building. I noticed that the note "Paved Plaza" is written over one of the pie shaped pieces which are surrounded by curbs. I hardly believe that you intended these two pieces to be paved. Of course, they would look very much better if they were left in grass. I assume this is your intention.

It seems to me that Study C is predicated upon the idea of raising Mr. Cret's building as noted in your letter. This is a matter which he will have to study very carefully, but it seems to me that the adjustment could be made by raising the terrace on the Constitution Avenue side, retaining the relation between the terrace and the building as it is in his present plans and increasing the number of steps between the terrace and the sidewalk on Constitution Avenue.

The Commission of Fine Arts, of course, is also interested in this matter and at the last meeting discussed the possibility of moving the Pan American Building further to the west in order to eliminate the danger of having the northeast corner too close to Virginia Avenue. Study C seems to me to indicate that the location proposed is quite satisfactory in so far as this point is concerned and I personally believe that not much would be gained by moving the Pan American building further to the west. I am sending a copy of this letter, together with a copy of your letter to Mr. Cret, to Mr. Moore and I would appreciate it if you would send him a blue print of Study C.

Very truly yours,
GILMORE D. CLARKE

The Commission felt that the suggestion of Secretary Ickes for a plaza treatment south of the Interior Department Building to Constitution Avenue with intersecting streets would be very bad planning and the scheme to locate the administration building in the Pan American grounds proper would place a large building at the edge of Constitution Avenue and would be very objectionable. The members of the Commission considered the matter and agreed with Mr. Clarke as to his criticisms. The Commission approved Scheme C.

In the afternoon at a joint meeting with the National Capital Park and Planning Commission the project was further considered. At this meeting Mr. Clarke made the following criticisms of the different schemes:

The scale of the Pan American Administration building is not satisfactory in relation to the Pan American building, when placed in the Pan American grounds as proposed.

Virginia Avenue is needed as a thoroughfare to take traffic from Constitution Avenue to northwest Washington.

To intersect Virginia Avenue with a new diagonal street (as shown in Mr. Ickes' sketch) is bad planning.

The Pan American Administration building located in the triangle set aside for it by Congress properly completes the scheme of buildings along Constitution Avenue west of 17th Street.

To create a plaza at a point where a building is needed to complete the frame for the Lincoln Memorial would be weak planning.

The new Interior Department building is not monumental and does not justify a frontage on Constitution Avenue.

No view from Constitution Avenue of the new Interior Department building was intended.

After consideration both Commissions approved Scheme C and Mr. Delano, Chairman of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, was asked to inform the President that it was the opinion of both Commissions that Scheme C should be carried out and that no radical change in Scheme C would be advisable.

10. NEW CHAIN BRIDGE: Under date of January 22, 1936, the following letter was received from Mr. George C. Shinn, Chairman of the Committee on Bridges of the Washington Board of Trade, regarding a new Chain Bridge:

My dear Mr. Moore:

We take pleasure in inclosing for your careful and considerate attention a copy of a letter addressed, under even date, to Colonel Dan I. Sultan, United States Army, and Engineer Commissioner of the

District of Columbia, with respect to the so-called Chain Bridge project.

We have taken the liberty in our letter to Colonel Sultan to refer to your Commission and to the possibility that the design of a new bridge will be submitted to your Commission for approval, or modification or possible rejection.

Our attention has been called to the possibility that your Commission would not favor a new bridge upon the present piers with a steel superstructure. As you probably know from hearsay at least, the Commissioners of the District of Columbia requested $350,000 and submitted an estimate for this amount to the Bureau of the Budget covering the cost of the replacement of the present old Chain Bridge at its present site upon the same piers. This request was denied for reasons with which we are not familiar.

As pointed out in the letter to Colonel Sultan, it is the purpose of the Committee on Bridges of the Washington Board of Trade to urge the Congress to grant the amount of $350,000 for the purpose of replacing the present old Chain Bridge. For a long time, as you probably know, we urged a high-level bridge at a point higher up on the Potomac River in the vicinity of Little Falls, but finding that there was no possible way to secure an appropriation from the Congress, through the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, for this type of bridge we have felt that we should attempt to get a utilitarian type of bridge at the present site and if proper upon the present piers, and that brings us to the real crux of the situation.

It has been suggested by some that the present piers unless elongated or cored and certainly raised cannot support a superstructure wholly of concrete or stone, and that if an appropriation of $350,000 should be allowed the most that could be expected would be the construction of a concrete floor with a steel superstructure and with cantilever sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. We understand that this bridge is about eighteen hundred feet long and the question was once raised as to whether or not it would be necessary to construct a new bridge with a steel superstructure.

We would be pleased to receive an expression of the views of your Commission upon the various phases of this matter, as we feel that your judgment based upon long experience in such matters will prove of great assistance in solving this vexatious problem.

Any information which you may feel inclined to give us and any help which you may be able to render to us will be greatly appreciated.

Very cordially yours,
(Signed) G. C. Shinn,
Chairman, Bridges Committee.

The Commission also considered a copy of a letter which Mr. Shinn had addressed to Colonel Sultan, District Commissioner (Exhibit G). The Commission considered the matter and felt that the Washington Board of Trade in recommending a new bridge to take the place of the old Chain Bridge should be guided by the standard set for new bridges in the District of Columbia as shown by the Arlington Memorial Bridge, Key Bridge and the recently completed Calvert Street Bridge, which cost $1,250,000. The amount stated for the new Chain Bridge of $350,000 was considered totally insufficient; Mr. Clarke who has had much experience in bridge building in park areas was emphatic as to this point.

Mr. Moore said he had been giving the question thought and offered the following resolution:

January 31, 1936.

The position of the Commission of Fine Arts in regard to the reconstruction of the Chain Bridge is quite clear and distinct.

First, the exact location of the bridge; and whether it should be a high or a low bridge, is a matter for determination by the National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Second, inasmuch as the bridge will form an important connection between the two great parkways leading on either bank of the Potomac to Great Falls; and inasmuch also as it will serve as a traffic highway between Maryland and Virginia, the bridge should have no fewer than four traffic lanes, and should be architecturally a bridge befitting a park. The approaches should be adequate for traffic; and should have landscape treatment in keeping with the parkways.

Third, such being the treatment called for, it is unnecessary to do more than state the fact that the sum of $360,000 proposed for reconstruction is totally inadequate.

The Commission adopted the resolution and a copy of it was sent to Mr. Shinn. (Exhibit G-1)

11. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE EXTENSION: Under date of January 17, 1936, Mr. Louis Simon, Supervising Architect, submitted sketches for an extension to the Government Printing Office with letter as follows:

Dear Sir:

There are being forwarded to you under separate cover, for comment and advice, two sets of blueprints and two sets of photographic prints each of the front and side elevations of the proposed new Warehouse building for the Government Printing Office, this city.

The return of one set of the prints with your comments thereon will be very much appreciated.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) L. A. Simon,
Supervising Architect.

The Government Printing Office has bought land across North Capitol Street from the present building in order to have a site for a warehouse. Mr. Moore pointed out the location for the warehouse on the east side of North Capitol Street and immediately north of the City Post Office. Later the old Government Printing Office at North Capitol and H Streets is to be remodeled. Mr. Moore said that this brings up a very important matter for the Commission to consider, that is, that North Capitol Street is one of the cardinal streets of the city--it divides the city into northeast and northwest and ultimately the entrance to the Soldiers Home will be at the head of North Capitol Street instead of First Street; therefore, it seems that buildings erected on North Capitol Street should be of a high class. The present Government Printing Office is a big red brick building which Mr. Moore felt ought to be painted white so that it will be less conspicuous across the plaza.

In regard to the design for the warehouse Mr. Moore felt it was not appropriate for Washington at all and suggested that the Supervising Architect take the style of the City Post Office next to it and carry the same lines through.

Mr. Moore pointed out that the recent enlargement of the City Post Office is absolutely in harmony with the old building. Mr. Swartwout affirmed Mr. Moore's view about the design that it should follow the lines of the City Post Office.

Mr. Howells thought an engineer could have done a better job with regard to the railway connection, and believed that the design should be re-studied.

When Mr. Simon came into the meeting Mr. Moore explained to him the necessity for designing the warehouse to conform to the adjacent City Post Office. Also his attention was called to the importance of developing North Capitol Street along proper architectural lines. Mr. Simon said that he had not attempted to do anything but what was suitable for a warehouse, but the Commission objected to the modern character of the design. Mr. Swartwout told Mr. Simon that there has been such a flood of these square-headed openings in buildings that people are going to become sick of them. After a little thought Mr. Simon said that he could see the lines of the City Post Office in a design for the Government Printing Office warehouse. Thereupon Mr. Abel, architect, of Mr. Simon's office, presented an alternate study more along the lines of what the Commission wanted, that is, a building with pilasters, which give a classical touch to the facade. Mr. Swartwout and Mr. Howells thought this would be appropriate and the Commission suggested that Mr. Abel use the sketch as a basis for further study.

Mr. Howells made a number of criticisms as to the railway viaduct. Mr. Clarke thought a simple utilitarian steel viaduct would be better than one of concrete; it could be made of open-latticed members and the arches could be made of the same depth. The design for the viaduct will be entirely restudied. A report was sent to Mr. Simon. (Exhibit H)

12. MERIDIAN HILL PARK LIGHTS: Mr. C. Marshall Finnan, Superintendent of the National Capital Parks, requested the advice of the Commission of Fine

Arts as to a light standard to be used for Meridian Hill Park. He said that on account of the cost it is desirable to use the No. 14 N pole of the District of Columbia lighting standards, which is about 12 feet high. He said the Millet lamp post, which is 10'6" high, is not in stock and it would involve an extra expense of two or three thousand dollars to have them made. Both poles have fluted columns.

The Commission raised no objection to using the No. 14 pole. However, objection was made to the globe. Mr. Swartwout strongly objected to the use of white glass globes for street lights. He said a lamp post should be unobtrusive in the daytime. Mr. Clarke said the modern method of using pebbled clear glass is far better.

Mr. Finnan showed from a catalogue an octagonal globe. The Commission considered this acceptable and Mr. Finnan said he would get estimates of cost for it. The question was raised whether such a globe would properly light the sidewalk. Mr. Finnan pointed out that this octagonal globe throws light from the bottom. It was thought increasing the distance between the poles might decrease the total cost of installation. In this case it would be possible to increase the distance between poles as these more expensive light standards are more efficient. It was suggested that as Mr. Peaslee is the architect of Meridian Hill Park he be consulted before the lamp standard is finally put in place.

13. SIXTEENTH STREET NICHE: MERIDIAN HILL PARK: Mr. Finnan reported that the National Parks Office is working on the drawings for the niche with a view to getting estimates. He said they have located the stalactites.

14. WATER TOWER, FORT DUPONT: Mr. Finnan submitted a photograph of a galvanized iron tank which the District Commissioners propose to erect at Fort Dupont for a water tower. It would project above the trees and would be very

unsightly. Mr. Clarke said it would be most inappropriate for erection in a park and the Commission disapproved the design. A report was sent to the Director of the National Park Service accordingly. (Exhibit I)

15. PENTHOUSE, BUREAU OF ENGRAVING AND PRINTING: At the joint meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Park and Planning Commission in the afternoon the question was brought up as to whether there should be individual penthouses on the new Bureau of Engraving extension facing 14th Street opposite the main building or whether there should be one penthouse extending along the roof of the building. A diagram was presented indicating both schemes. Both Commissions unanimously favored the single long penthouse.

16. PARKWAY TO BELVOIR AND GUNSTON HALL: A sketch was submitted by Mr. Nolen, Director of Planning, showing the proposed scheme to extend the George Washington Memorial Parkway from Mt. Vernon to Belvoir and thence to Gunston Hall. Mr. Caemmerer brought to the attention of both Commissions a copy of the Act of Congress giving authority to restore Belvoir, the old Fairfax Mansion, to the Secretary of the Interior. The Act reads as follows:

> Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of War be, and he is hereby, authorized to transfer to the Department of the Interior the mansion site and such portions of the grounds of Belvoir, part of the estate of Lord Fairfax, located within the Belvoir Military Reservation, Virginia, as may be necessary for the restoration and operation of the historic home and grounds for the benefit and inspiration of the people: Provided, That upon cessation of such use the premises so transferred shall revert to the jurisdiction of the War Department: Provided, however, That nothing in this Act shall be construed as authorizing the transfer of any part of the said reservation which, in the judgment of the Secretary of War, is needed for the proper development, control, or use of the reservation for military purposes: Provided further, That upon cessation of such use the premises so transferred shall revert to the jurisdiction of the War Department: And provided further, That the transfer authorized by this Act shall not

require discontinuance of the operation of the Fort Belvoir Fish Cultural Station, however, its removal and establishment elsewhere on the Belvoir Military Reservation, Virginia, as may be agreed upon by the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of War, is hereby authorized.

Approved, August 29, 1935.

Both Commissions expressed their interest in the project. It was stated that ultimately it is planned to extend the George Washington Memorial Parkway to the birthplace of George Washington at Wakefield, about 60 miles south of Washington on the Potomac.

17. GASOLINE SERVICE STATION AT 22ND AND P STREETS AND THE ROCK CREEK PARKWAY, N. W.: The question of building a gasoline service station along P Street at 22nd Street and the Rock Creek Parkway was brought to the attention of both Commissions. It was stated that the service station would take the place of a riding school which is there now and for the privilege of building the station at this location the Gulf Refining Company proposes to give a 17-foot strip of land along the parkway. Both Commissions interposed no objection to the erection of a gasoline service station at this location if it is properly designed by an architect with due regard to the Rock Creek Parkway and the Presbyterian Church on the north side of P Street and if the design has the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts.

18. NEW APPOINTMENT: Mr. Moore reported that confirmation had been received from the White House that the President had appointed Mr. C. L. Borie, Jr., of Philadelphia, a member of the Commission of Fine Arts to take the place of Mr. Swartwout whose term of office had expired. (Mr. Borie took the oath of office on February 17, 1936.)

The Commission adjourned at 4:30 p. m.

C O P Y

February 3, 1936.

Dear Mr. Crunelle:

Your letter of January 30, and the photographs of your full-sized clay model of the General Artemas Ward Statue received attention of the Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on January 31, 1936.

The Commission noted a few changes which you made in the model submitted last June. In general the Commission considered the full sized model quite satisfactory.

Mr. Lawrie raised the question whether the head is not a bit large and whether it is as fine as you would want it to be. Mr. Lawrie also called attention to the fact that the buttons on the coat should be aligned horizontally now that you have made other changes.

The members of the Commission are not satisfied with the model of the cannon. Mr. Howells made the sketch which is attached hereto of an old colonial cannon used during the American Revolution. The Commission prefer this type to the bold end indicated in your model.

You know that Harvard is celebrating its 300th anniversary in October. We think the statue should be completed by that time. Will you please embody the changes suggested in your model as soon as possible and submit the photographs of the finally completed full sized model.

Last June it was suggested that you send a small scale model of the pedestal as revised and simplified. Will you please have one made and send it to the Commission. Also please state the kind of stone you would propose to use for the pedestal? Also we would like to know where you expect to have the bronze cast made and by what process.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very truly yours,
(Signed) Charles Moore,
Chairman.

Mr. Leonard Crunelle,
6016 Ingleside Avenue,
Chicago, Illinois.

EXHIBIT A

C O P Y

January 31, 1936.

Dear Mr. Moore:

Your letter of December 26, 1935, has had the careful consideration of the Commission of Fine Arts. You ask suggestions as to the recommendations of the American Institute of Architects that the Government cooperate with the Institute and other architectural societies of this country in an official invitation to foreign countries to hold the Fifteenth International Congress of Architects in Washington.

The Commission of Fine Arts suggest that the Government of the United States so cooperate with the American architectural organizations in issuing an official invitation to foreign governments as requested.

American architects have enjoyed and profited by the thirteen international congresses held under the auspices of foreign governments and it would seem appropriate that the hospitality so long enjoyed be returned.

This is particularly appropriate at this time, when the United States is taking a leading place among the nations in respect to its architecture and landscape architecture in meeting the conditions of modern life. The rapid advance of the United States, creating new demands and bringing into play new methods and types of construction, make this country an inviting field for study by the members of the architectural profession. This is the more important because of the extension of American ideas and methods into foreign lands.

At the same time the civic and historic consciousness of the nation is expressing itself in numerous buildings, parks, monuments and works of the fine arts generally. Such works are influenced largely by the historic continuity of the fine arts; but are constantly being modified by new occasions and new requirements presented in a new country and an advancing civilization. Such adaptations as new occasions call for are both interesting to see and profitable to study by practitioners of the fine arts.

Particularly would it be fitting to invite foreign architects to enjoy the hospitality of Washington; a capital wisely planned by the founders of the republic as a work of art, developed from small beginnings into one of the most convenient, dignified and beautiful capitals of the world, and already an example being followed in the planning of capitals in foreign countries.

EXHIBIT B

The official portion of the entertainment need not be extensive or costly; but it should be carefully and systematically planned in such manner as to comport with the dignity of the nation and the distinguished character of the guests from abroad.

In short, the Commission of Fine Arts are of the opinion that such an official recognition of the place of architecture in this country, would redown to the prestige of the United States in the world of the fine arts.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

(Signed) Charles Moore,
Chairman.

Hon. R. Walton Moore,
Assistant Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

C O P Y

January 31, 1936.

Dear Mr. Lanham:

You have asked the opinion of the Commission of Fine Arts as to H. J. Res 450 authorizing the erection of a memorial building to commemorate the winning of the Oregon country for the United States.

The bill provides that the plans for the proposed building, including naturally its landscape setting, shall have the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts. Should the bill become law this Commission will be prepared, if requested, to advise as to the selection of an architect (preferably a resident of the region); and to discuss with the architect, when selected, the general lines to be followed.

This method will obviate difficulties such as recently occurred in connection with the plans for two Government buildings at the Dallas Fair. The delay in that case arose from the fact that there was no such preliminary discussion. Completed plans were presented with a request for immediate approval.

The Commission took unusual pains to hasten consideration and to secure changes involving betterments (as the Commission believe), at no sacrifice of space or increase in costs. Thus was carried out, so far as was possible, the duties imposed by Congress upon the Commission.

Two special meetings of the Commission were held to remedy a situation that would not have arisen had the usual consultation taken place.

The proposed legislation involves the recognition by the United States of the long continued and historically significant movement which brought the Oregon country into the Union. The subject, therefore, has a national as well as a local character; and the building to be constructed should represent the ideas of permanence, appropriateness, and architectural fineness.

If Congress shall see fit to enact the proposed legislation, the Commission of Fine Arts will use their best endeavors to see that the provisions thereof be carried out according to the spirit as well as the letter of the Act.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very respectfully yours,
(Signed) Charles Moore,
Chairman.

Hon. Fritz G. Lanham, Chairman,
Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT C

C O P Y

February 4, 1936.

Dear Mr. Wyeth:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on January 31, 1936, approved your design for a fire department building at Rhode Island Avenue and 14th Street, N. E.

The Commission also approved your design for additions to the Anacostia Junior High School and your design for the mess hall to be built at the District of Columbia Reformatory at Occoquan, Virginia.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

Mr. Nathan C. Wyeth,
Municipal Architect,
District Building,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT D

C O P Y

February 5, 1936.

Dear Mr. Savage:

The Commission of Fine Arts missed you at the meeting last Friday, January 31. The Section of Painting and Sculpture, Treasury Department, sent revised sketches by Varnum Poor for mural paintings in the Department of Justice Building and also a sketch for a mural painting by Leon Kroll for the Attorney General's reception room in the same building.

Mr. Moore asked me to send the sketches to you for comment and advice. I am sending them by railway express.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) H. P. Caemmerer,

Secretary.

Mr. Eugene Savage,
Ossining, New York.

EXHIBIT E

C O P Y

February 3, 1936.

Dear Mr. Kendall:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on January 31, 1936, approved your design for the Jusserand Memorial, with the suggestion that the back of the memorial be square and carried up higher. Major Clarke made certain suggestions as to the planting, which can be taken up when the memorial is erected.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

Mr. Wm. Mitchell Kendall,
101 Park Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

EXHIBIT F

January 22, 1936.

Colonel Dan I. Sultan, United States Army,
Engineer Commissioner, District of Columbia,
District Building,
Washington, D. C.

CHAIN BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

My dear Colonel Sultan:

It is the purpose of the Committee on Bridges of the Washington Board of Trade, acting through its representatives, to appear before the Sub-Committees of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations in connection with the hearings soon to be undertaken with respect to the annual budget of the District of Columbia.

It is our purpose to renew our urgent plea for the replacement of the old Chain Bridge which has long since been considered by many as unsafe, and certainly out-moded with the present volume of traffic, and which traffic as we have reason to believe will continue to grow by reason of the rapid development of Arlington County and the adjacent territory.

You are doubtless familiar with the history of the present Chain Bridge structure. Briefly, it may be stated that the present bridge was constructed upon the present piers which had previously supported other bridges during the earlier part of the last century. The present bridge was constructed under the auspices and direction of the Bureau of Public Buildings and Grounds, at that time connected with the Office of the Corps of Engineers of the United States Army. The Congress appropriated initially the sum of $100,000 toward the reconstruction of the bridge, the old bridge having been largely destroyed owing to the fact that during the Civil War it was utilized by the Union troops in protecting the City of Washington against the possible invasion of the Confederate forces.

The $100,000 originally appropriated was not sufficient and this amount was subsequently increased, as we

(Colonel Dan I. Sultan)

recall, by an additional appropriation of $15,000.

The present bridge was opened for traffic in March, 1874, and from 1874 until March 3, 1893, the bridge remained under the supervision of the Bureau of Public Buildings and Grounds, which was still connected with the Office of the Corps of Engineers of the United States Army.

On March 3, 1893, the Congress, by special Act, transferred the jurisdiction of all bridges, with the exception of the then Aqueduct Bridge, to the supervision and control of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia. Since March 3, 1893, until the present time, the official records of the Office of the Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia show that approximately $120,000 has been expended in maintenance and general repairs, including an appropriation of $40,000 which was used to replace the pier on the Virginia side of the Potomac River.

The Committee on Bridges of the Washington Board of Trade has endeavored in every reasonable and proper way to present its views before the Sub-Committees in Congress, and at all times have cooperated to the fullest extent with the Commissioners of the District of Columbia. This is our present purpose and that brings us to the point we desire to stress in this communication, namely:

That the Commissioners of the District of Columbia having in mind the renewal of their plea for an appropriation of $350,000 previously submitted to the Bureau of the Budget as an estimate covering the cost of the replacement, must be prepared to meet the consistent attack by members of Congress, and particularly the views of the Honorable Thomas L. Blanton, who insistently contends that the States of Maryland and Virginia should contribute proportionately with the District of Columbia and the Federal Government toward the construction of a new bridge.

It may be known to you that in order to meet and overcome this contention, the Commissioners of the District of Columbia addressed letters to the Governors of the States of Maryland and Virginia and to the State Roads Commission of Maryland and the Highway Department of Virginia, urging and respectfully requesting that these officials indicate positively and definitely their individual and collective reaction to the insistence of Congress that the cost of the replacement of the present old bridge should, as stated above, be borne in part by these respective States. Replies conclusively show that the State of Virginia, like the State of Maryland, is unwilling to contribute anything whatsoever toward the cost of a new bridge. The most

(Colonel Dan I. Sultan)

that can be expected from Virginia is the rearrangement of the approaches on that side of the Potomac River which will be necessitated when the piers are sufficiently elevated, as we understand is now contemplated, to overcome the recurring dangers from high water, freshets and ice jams in the upper reaches of the Potomac River.

It has come to our attention that the Commission of Fine Arts which doubtless will pass upon any design of a bridge structure which the Commissioners of the District of Columbia may, in their judgment conclude to be proper, will insist upon a more costly type of bridge than the one which is now contemplated upon the basis of an estimate of $350,000.

We are not advised as to whether the present piers unless they are elongated and cored can sustain a superstructure without the addition of additional piers of a concrete or stone character, as may be urged by the Commission of Fine Arts.

We want to be prepared to meet every possible and reasonable objection that the members of Congress may interpose in connection with our request for the granting of the $350,000, as recommended by the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, and to that end we would be pleased to receive as soon as may be convenient the following information:

1. A copy of the justification which was submitted by the Commissioners of the District of Columbia to the Bureau of the Budget requesting the allowance of an estimate of $350,000.

2. A statement, if permissible, of the type and character of bridge which the Commissioners of the District of Columbia contemplate constructing in the event the $350,000 is granted by Congress.

We are reminded in this connection that when the new bridge is constructed upon piers which necessarily must be elevated, that it will necessitate the realignment and widening of the present roadway approach on the District side of the Potomac River, and probably will require for such realignment and widening the institution of condemnation proceedings, as there seems to be some question, as we are advised, as to whether the new roadway contemplated as an approach to the possible new bridge would be sufficiently wide to accommodate the increasing volume of traffic. This, to our mind, is a very important phase of the matter and we had indulged the hope that the Commissioners of the District of Columbia would have felt constrained to have included in the amount for the construction of the bridge, an

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additional amount to cover the cost of the realignment and widening of the highway approach. However, there may have been good reasons for omitting the highway feature at this time.

Trusting that you will give this matter your very prompt and careful consideration, we are, with respect,

Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE C. SHINN,
Chairman,
Bridges Committee.

mcr

C O P Y

February 3, 1936.

Dear Mr. Shinn:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on January 31, 1936, gave consideration to your letter of January 22, 1936, regarding a new Chain Bridge.

The Commission appreciate the interest of your committee in its endeavor to procure a new Chain Bridge but the Commission feel that no bridge should be built unless it comes up to the standard that has been set for new bridges in Washington as is seen in the Arlington Memorial Bridge, the Key Bridge and the newly built Calvert Street Bridge. The sum suggested of $350,000 the Commission regard totally inadequate. Furthermore, the new bridge must take into consideration the George Washington Memorial Parkway, which has been authorized for each bank of the Potomac to Great Falls.

After careful consideration the Commission of Fine Arts adopted the following resolution:

> The position of the Commission of Fine Arts in regard to the reconstruction of the Chain Bridge is quite clear and distinct.
>
> First, the exact location of the bridge; and whether it should be a high or a low bridge, is a matter for determination by the National Capital Park and Planning Commission.
>
> Second, inasmuch as the bridge will form an important connection between the two great parkways leading on either bank of the Potomac to Great Falls; and inasmuch also as it will serve as a traffic highway between Maryland and Virginia, the bridge should have no fewer than four traffic lanes, and should be architecturally a bridge befitting a park. The approaches should be adequate for traffic; and should have landscape treatment in keeping with the parkways.
>
> Third, such being the treatment called for, it is unnecessary to do more than state the fact that the sum of $360,000 proposed for reconstruction is totally inadequate.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very truly yours,
(Signed) Charles Moore,
Chairman.

Mr. George C. Shinn, Chairman,
Bridges Committee,
Washington Board of Trade,
Evening Star Building,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT G-1

C O P Y

February 10, 1936.

Dear Mr. Simon:

At their meeting on January 31, 1936, the Commission of Fine Arts considered the designs which you submitted with your letter of January 17, 1936, for a warehouse to be built on the east side of North Capitol Street and immediately north of the City Post Office as a supplement to the Government Printing Office.

The Commission considered the fact that North Capitol Street is one of the cardinal streets of Washington, and should be so treated. Ultimately it will lead to the main entrance to the Soldiers Home.

In the extension of the City Post Office, Congress provided for a harmonious and dignified treatment on North Capitol Street--a building having permanent architectural style and treatment. The proposed building will ultimately be but an extension of the Post Office and should be designed in harmony with it. At least the design should not be at variance with the Post Office building and with every other important building in the vicinity. It is not a question of expense but of a proper and decent harmony.

The Commission, therefore, disapprove the sketches as submitted for the warehouse. The alternate sketch submitted at the meeting by you and Mr. Abel of a facade for the Government Printing Office annex give promise of being satisfactory. It is suggested that a design in accordance with that sketch be submitted.

The Commission made a number of suggestions to you as to the treatment of the viaduct across First Street, N. E., and after consultation with you the Commission understand these suggestions will be worked out in the revised design.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very respectfully yours,
(Signed) Charles Moore,
Chairman.

Mr. Louis A. Simon,
Supervising Architect,
Treasury Department,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT H

C O P Y

February 10, 1936.

Dear Mr. Cammerer:

Referring to the memorandum of January 30, inclosing a photograph of a proposed water tower for Fort Dupont the Commission of Fine Arts advise you that the erection of a water tower such as is proposed would be a serious blot on the landscape of the Anacostia region. As you very well know, the purchase by the National Capital Park and Planning Commission of extensive lands for park purposes and parkways in the Anacostia section is certain to make that region one of the most beautiful portions of the District of Columbia. Nature has done its part abundantly.

If and when a water tower is to be erected it should be designed so as to be an ornament rather than a detriment to the region. This can be done. Inclosed is a photograph of the water tower at the Fort Reno Reservoir. A design much less elaborate may be used at Fort Dupont, but the park character of the Fort Reno design should be a guide.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

Hon. A. B. Cammerer, Director,
National Park Service,
Interior Department,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT I